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COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
Fifty-third session
Agenda item 9

FURTHER PROMOTION AND ENCOURAGEMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS, INCLUDING THE QUESTION OF THE PROGRAMME AND METHODS OF WORK OF THE COMMISSION

Argentina, Australia*, Austria, Belarus, Belgium*, Brazil, Canada, Croatia*, Germany, Greece*, Honduras*, Hungary*, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Lithuania*, Portugal*, Republic of Korea, Romania*, Russian Federation, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia* and Togo*: draft resolution

1997/... Regional arrangements for the promotion and protection of human rights

The Commission on Human Rights,

Recalling the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights on 25 June 1993 which reiterated, inter alia, the need to consider the possibility of establishing regional and subregional arrangements for the promotion and protection of human rights where they do not already exist,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 32/127 of 16 December 1977 and all subsequent resolutions of the Assembly concerning regional arrangements for the promotion and protection of human rights,

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* In accordance with rule 69, paragraph 3, of the rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council.

Recalling also Commission on Human Rights resolution 1995/46 of 3 March 1995,

Reaffirming that regional arrangements play a fundamental role in promoting and protecting human rights and should reinforce universal human rights standards, as contained in international human rights instruments, and their protection,

Recalling that the World Conference recommended that more resources should be made available for the strengthening or the establishment of regional arrangements for the promotion and protection of human rights under the programmes of advisory services and technical assistance of the Centre for Human Rights,

Supporting the efforts made by the United Nations, the specialized agencies and the regional intergovernmental organizations in order to promote and protect human rights at the regional level,

Noting the growing exchanges between the United Nations and the bodies created by the United Nations in accordance with the treaties dealing with human rights on the one hand and the intergovernmental regional organizations on the other in order to promote the mutual exchange of information and the conclusion of regional arrangements for the promotion and the protection of human rights,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.4/1997/35)

1. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General;

2. Welcomes the continuing cooperation and assistance of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights/Centre for Human Rights in the further strengthening of the existing regional arrangements and regional machinery for the promotion and protection of human rights, in particular with regard to advisory services and technical assistance, public information and education, with a view to exchanging information and experience in the field of human rights;

3. Also welcomes, in that respect, the close cooperation of the High Commissioner/Centre for Human Rights in the organization of regional and subregional training courses and workshops in the field of human rights, high-level government expert meetings and a regional conference of national human rights institutions, aimed at creating greater understanding of the promotion and protection of human rights issues in the regions, improving procedures and examining the various systems for the promotion and protection

of universally accepted human rights standards and at identifying obstacles to ratification of the principal international human rights treaties and strategies to overcome them;

4. Stresses the importance of the programme of advisory services in the field of human rights and renews its appeal to all Governments to consider making use of the possibilities offered by the United Nations, under this programme, of organizing information or training courses at the national level for government personnel on the application of international human rights standards and the experience of relevant international bodies, and notes with satisfaction, in that respect, the establishment of technical cooperation projects with several Governments of the Asian and Pacific region;

5. Requests the Secretary-General, as foreseen in programme 35, Promotion and protection of human rights, of the Medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997, to continue to strengthen exchanges between the United Nations and regional intergovernmental organizations dealing with human rights;

6. Welcomes the growing exchanges between the High Commissioner/Centre for Human Rights and several regional intergovernmental organizations as well as between the bodies created by the United Nations in accordance with the treaties dealing with human rights and the regional mechanisms for protection of human rights;

7. Invites States in areas where regional arrangements in the field of human rights do not yet exist to consider concluding agreements with a view to the establishment within their respective regions of suitable regional machinery for the promotion and protection of human rights;

8. Requests the High Commissioner/Centre for Human Rights to continue to pay special attention to the most appropriate ways of assisting, at their request, countries of the different regions under the programme of advisory services and to make, where necessary, relevant recommendations;

9. Invites the Secretary-General, in the framework of the report he will present to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session, to provide information about the progress made since the adoption of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action on reinforcing the exchange of information and extending collaboration between the organs of the United Nations dealing with human rights and regional organizations in the field of the protection and promotion of human rights;

10. Requests the Secretary-General to submit to it at its fifty-fifth session a report on the state of regional arrangements for the promotion and protection of human rights, to formulate concrete proposals and recommendations on ways and means to strengthen cooperation between the United Nations and regional arrangements in the field of human rights and to include therein the results of action taken in pursuance of the present resolution;

11. Decides to consider this question further at its fifty-fifth session.